Project Summary Sheet

Project Name: Clark Conservation Easement and Floodplain Restoration Project

Tracking No: 200784116

Location: Arroyo Grande, CA

County: San Luis Obispo

Project Sponsor: Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District

Point of Contact: Julie Thomas

Co-applicant(s): None

Assembly District: #33

Senate District: #15

Project Summary: Corbett Creek is a tributary off the Arroyo Grande Creek and is upstream of the City of Arroyo Grande. The project would acquire land and build a detention basin on a portion of the property. The detention basin would keep sediment and water from reaching the downstream areas in the City of Arroyo Grande. The rest of the property would be used for horse grazing or would be riparian habitat.

Flood Benefits: The Arroyo Grande Creek Flood Control Channel is located 5 miles downstream from the proposed Clark project site adjacent to urbanized areas of the City of Arroyo Grande. Sediment capture at the Clark site will reduce the costs of Zone 1/1A channel maintenance by reducing the frequency of necessary sediment removal and help to reduce flooding in those areas.

The application indicates that the Clark property should detain approximately 50 acre feet of floodwaters for about 6 hours. This would reduce peak flow on the Arroyo Grande Creek by 90 cfs, a 2% reduction, in a 10-year and 20-year flood.

The detention basin on the Clark property is one of 8 planned to reduce flood risks in the community. If all 8 detention basins were built, the 10-year event peak flows would be reduced by over 13% (670 cfs). The relative benefits to peak flow reduction are lessened as storm events become larger, with an approximate 2% (230 cfs) potential reduction shown for the 50-year event.

These numbers were based on a hydraulic study where the detention basin on the site was 11.7 acres in size whereas the size of the detention basin in the grant application would be 7-8 acres. Therefore, the amount of flood water to be detained would be less and the effect on flood flows is not clear.

The application indicates that the expected dollar value savings in flood damage repairs for the implementation of the Clark project alone is expected to be almost $1 million for a 10-year flood recurrence or $100,000 annually.

Pre-project 20-year flood damage repair/restoration costs:	$49,912,376
Post-project 20-year flood damage repair/restoration costs:	$48,914,128
Savings resulting from Clark project implementation alone:	$ 998,248

Agricultural Benefits: The land not used for the detention basin or that is not riparian habitat would be conserved for horse grazing. The Williamson Act does not consider the grazing of recreational horses an agricultural use and commercial farming is not practical on the parcel. Therefore, there is little agricultural value, relatively speaking.

The site is vulnerable to conversion to a non-agricultural use and conservation through easement would prevent development on the site.

Agricultural Land Conserved: Not clear. There are 7-9 acres that would be acquired. The detention basin would be built on some of this area. The remaining area that is not riparian habitat would be used for horse grazing.

Wildlife Benefits: This project would protect riparian habitat on site. Half of the detention basin would have wetland habitat at all times (sediment to be cleaned out periodically). Downstream habitats would be protected from sedimentation and erosion. This is particularly important for special-status species such as the steelhead trout and the red-legged frog.

Wildlife Habitat Conserved: Not clear. There are 7-9 acres that would be acquired. The detention basin would be built on some of this area. The remaining area that would not be used for horse grazing would be conserved riparian habitat.

There is no mention of the amount of wetland habitat that would be within the detention basin.

Total area conserved: 7-9 acres

Other Benefits: There would be groundwater recharge.

Total Cost: $997,700

FPCP Cost: $590,700

Funding Partners and Share of Cost: Local Funds Contributed is $7,000. Amount of in-kind contributions is $20,000. However this number should be significantly higher because the landowners are donating much of the market development value of the land to this project that could sell for more than $1,000,000. Additional funding sources are from the State Coastal Conservancy in the amount of $400,000.

Additional Questions:

1. Is there a full hydrologic and hydraulic report with the application or is there simply an engineer's opinion? Either way, what is the conclusion as to the anticipated flood benefits of the project?

   The 2006 "Arroyo Grande Creek Erosion, Sedimentation and Flooding Alternatives Study" serves as the primary hydrologic and hydraulic analysis for the proposed Clark project.

   If all 8 detention basins were built, the 10-year event peak flows would be reduced by over 13% (670 cfs). The relative benefits to peak flow reduction are lessened as storm events become larger, with an approximate 2% (230 cfs) potential reduction shown for the 50-year event.

   Information particular to the Clark detention basin (as listed in Flood Benefits above) was provided in the application. The Clark project design process will include further hydrologic and hydraulic modeling particular to the Clark project.

2. What exactly will the FPCP funds pay for?

   FPCP funding for the Clark Project will provide partial funding for acquisition of a conservation easement and establishment of a floodwater and sediment detention basin.

   a. If the project applicant indicated they could accept less funding, what (if anything) would be cut from the project? What is lost by providing less FPCP grant money?

      The estimated easement price of $435,000 was based on discussions with the landowner who expressed willingness to sell the easement for less than market value in order to keep the land in open space. If they were to sell the land for construction of 6 to 8 houses, the potential sales price could easily be more than $1,000,000.

      The consulting firm currently completing the preliminary design has indicated that the estimated detention basin costs are most likely very close to actual costs.

Any significant reduction in total project budget would likely endanger the project, because estimated costs for the easement purchase are already far below market value and the detention basin costs cannot be reduced.

b. Does the applicant have access to alternate funding to replace the amount deducted from their request so that they can still spend the total amount they requested? If so, what would be the alternate funding source(s) and is the alternate funding already allocated, promised or committed?

The applicant would have to find alternate funding.

c. When giving a project score credit for matching funds, how much of the funding is matched? What is the source of the matching funds and are the matching funds already committed?

Total Project Cost	$997,700
FPCP Funds Requested	$590,700
State Coastal Conservancy	$400,000 - contingent on obtaining FPCP grant and then SCC Board approval.
State Coastal Conservancy	$21,970 - funds obtained and being used for site assessment, topographic survey, preliminary design, etc.
City of Arroyo Grande	$7,000 - funds have been obtained and are currently being used for the property appraisal.
City of Arroyo Grande	$10,000 - Estimated committed in-kind funding for environmental review, planning, permitting, and GIS services.
Natural Resources Conservation Service	$10,000 - Estimated committed in-kind funding for participation in project design and review, providing office space and supplies.

The landowners, Mike and Connie Clark, are donating much of the market development value of the land to this project, and asking for far less compensation than they could obtain if they were to take full advantage of all of the development rights under current zoning laws. If they were to sell the land for construction of 6 to 8 houses, the potential sales price could easily be more than $1,000,000.

3. If there is funding for acquisition of property, is the type of ownership an easement, fee title or both easement and fee title? Who will own the easement and/or fee title?

   The easement would be held by the applicant, the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District. The Clarks would still own the property in fee.

4. Does any portion of the project site have mitigation bank potential for DWR to gain mitigation credits for its maintenance program? (Note: Mitigation property would need to be within 40 miles of the disturbance area that needs to be mitigated)

   Not applicable.

5. Is the project USACE authorized under the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)? If so, is there USACE funding for the project pursuant to WRDA? Should the USACE be fully funding the project?

   The project is not USACE authorized under the Water Resources Development Act.

6. Can the management of transitory water storage on the site be optimized for flood benefit? Can the project be designed to retain floodwater? Is the applicant willing to work with DWR on the timing of water management during extreme flood events?

   The detention and sediment basin design plans are not yet completed, but the applicant is willing to include water controls in the design. The applicant is willing to work with DWR on the timing of water management during extreme flood events.